

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, August 22, 1996

Published Since 1877

## For missionary doctor...

## Gaza's gall bladders, not gunshot wounds, focus of surgery

GAZA (BP) — Peace? To Dean Fitzgerald it means operating on sick gall bladders instead of gunshot wounds.

The Southern Baptist physician and surgeon still goes to work each day at Ahli Arab Hospital and still has a heavy caseload. But the adrenaline-pumping shootings so predominant during the Intifada — the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation — have vanished.

As Gaza struggles to lift itself to self-government, conditions approaching normal are returning to this narrow strip of rocky land tucked between Israel, Egypt, and the Mediterranean. "Normal," of course, is hard to define here.

On the surface, things look better. The nightmarish painted slogans of death once covering most storefronts during the Intifada have been whitewashed over. Burning tires have long gone and perennially poor roads are getting patches.

"I think there's a good deal more pride in the surroundings now that people feel they have possession of the land more or less," said Dona Fitzgerald, a Southern Baptist representative who ministers through Gaza Baptist Church in Gaza City.

Stores and shops are filled with goods, indicating more prosperity than actually exists. Asked if business is good, several shopkeepers in Gaza City just shook their heads sadly. "Business? There isn't any. Nobody has any money," said one businessman.

Israel has kept its borders with Gaza closed more or less tightly since February after a series of terrorist bombings designed to sway the elections in Israel and derail the peace process between Israelis and their Arab neighbors. Although lines of heavily laden trucks come and go at border crossings, only a relatively few Palestinians can be seen crossing into Israel. That's where the jobs are.

During February and March almost all cross-border traffic was stopped. By early

July the Israeli government was allowing some men over the age of 45 to enter Israel to work. Later the age was dropped to 35.

The scarcity of jobs in Gaza forces people to depend on Israel for work. In Gaza City businessmen have opened a pasta factory, a cookie-making operation and small clothes-making businesses. But most of these depend on people who have money to spend. And with few allowed into Israel to work, the economic picture remains grim.

Earlier this year, Gaza donkeys were feasting on carnations because flower growers could not move their short-lived plants across the border. Ironically, local markets have had better-quality fruits and vegetables for sale than normal because farmers were unable to transport them to Israel. Products that do cross into Israel are greatly delayed by fastidious inspectors searching for bombs.

"Food is plentiful in the markets — but expensive. Fruits and vegetables grown here are less expensive than other products but still more expensive than before. Anything brought in is very expensive. A lot of people here are living on \$200 a month — that's too little for healthy living," said Dona Fitzgerald.

One Palestinian believer said he was working two jobs, but the \$600 he earns each month is not enough for rent, food and other basics. "About 40% of the people here have lots of money and the rest have little," he said. "There is less of a middle class now and more extremes of wealth and poverty."

Members of Gaza Baptist Church have helped some needy people directly. But Palestinians still depend on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency to help the neediest cases. Recently the agency has been trying to teach women jobs skills to support their families as one way to combat infant malnutrition.

Still, Palestinians who have returned from abroad have brought money back with

them. High-rise apartment buildings are going up all over the city. A new park with shrubs and paved plazas has opened in downtown Gaza City.

It is a shaky economy and an uncertain peace. But for Palestinians who have endured more than 25 years of war and occupation, it is a kind of normal.



**PLENTIFUL MARKET** — Southern Baptist representatives Scott Terry (center) and his wife Sharin (foreground) buy fruit on the street in Gaza. Food is plentiful in the markets — but expensive because the sealed-off border with Israel has stressed the economy. Still, there are hopeful signs. "I think there's a good deal more pride in the surroundings now people feel they have possession of the land more or less," says Dona Fitzgerald, a Southern Baptist representative who ministers through Gaza Baptist Church in Gaza City. (BP photo by Mike Creswell)

### Abortion alternatives

Eight years after the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board established the alternatives to abortion office, director Sylvia Boothe reports that the office continues to gain recognition as more churches, associations, and individuals learn the ways to respond to crisis pregnancies. "I think there's more awareness as we go along that there's something positive that we can do for these young women. It's one thing to say no, that abortion's not the answer to an unplanned pregnancy, but we as Christians, I feel, are very strongly challenged to provide the resources needed by a young woman facing a crisis pregnancy," she said. Boothe's office conducts an 18-hour training session on how to start a crisis pregnancy program, as well as 12-hour conferences on other forms of ministries for crisis pregnancies. Boothe's books, "No Easy Choices" and "Not an Easy Time" are available, along with a 14-minute video entitled "Help, I'm Pregnant," and a 24-minute video entitled "Heart of the Matter." For more information on the alternatives to abortion program, call (800) 962-0851.

### Recycle!

I.C. McLendon was always disturbed when Southern Baptists discarded their used literature at the end of each quarter. "The Word of God is the Word of God," he reasoned, and there must be churches and individuals who could use the materials. The Oklahoma City physician teamed up with friend Jim Messick and began Project Africa, a ministry that has shipped over one million pieces of literature to African Christians over the past three years. More than 300 churches of various denominations in 18 states are now participating in the project. Messick, a retired wholesale foods sales manager, said Project Africa "has been a large factor in revitalizing me physically, spiritually, and mentally," while continuing to recover from a massive heart attack in 1987. "You can't put a price on things like this," he said. McLendon and Messick hope to see Project Africa continue on its steep growth curve. "If you don't use the knowledge God's given you, it's a waste. If he gives the opportunity and we quit doing it, it's a waste," McLendon said.

### Looking Back...

#### 10 years ago

Earl Kelly of Jackson, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, and industrialist Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, are invited to China to meet with religious leaders there.

#### 20 years ago

Anne Washburn McWilliams, editorial associate for "The Baptist Record," and Betty Smith, secretary in the MBCB's Student Work Department, receive excellence in Christian writing awards at a North Carolina writers conference.

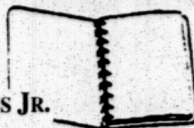
#### 50 years ago

More than 4,000 people pack the Jackson City Auditorium during a Youth for Christ Rally to hear R.G. Lee, pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, deliver his famous "Pay Day Someday" sermon for the 265th time.



# EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

WILLIAM H. PERKINS JR.



## Got an opinion? Write us!

It comes as no surprise to an editor of "The Baptist Record" that Mississippi Baptists are people of strong opinions based on deep convictions.

We certainly don't mind speaking up on issues that concern or disturb us: religion, government, football, the pastor's sermon, *ad infinitum*.

Name the issue, and you will find at least one Mississippi Baptist willing to give you a piece of his/her mind on the subject.

That's why Mississippi Baptists need a forum of their very own in which they can express their views — the whole idea behind the "Letters to the Editor" section of this newspaper.

Ask an editor of a publication of almost any type, and you'll get an earful about the immense popularity of letters written by readers to that publication.

Surveys indicate letters to the editor are among the most-read items in a publication. People are intensely interested in what other people have to say.

The "Letters to the Editor" section of this newspaper is the place where Baptists can talk to other Baptists about Baptist issues. While letters are not limited to Baptist issues, it's a fact that most letters deal with those concerns.

Letters written to this newspaper are not selected or discarded because of subject matter or the editor's personal viewpoints. However, certain established guidelines must be met (as detailed on page 6 of this issue), and there are a few do's and don'ts that will increase the effectiveness of your message:

Keep in mind that you will have access to a majority of the 600,000 Baptists in this state if you are published in this newspaper. That includes pastors, church staff members, lay leaders, every foreign missionary with a Mississippi connection, and maybe even your mother.

You should be awed by that thought.

Get your facts straight and be absolutely confident in your opinions, because you can be sure that a reader will challenge your conclusions if you're off-target. You will likely be held accountable for what you write for some time to come.

Be precise, write on an understandable level, and do it in as few words as possible. Letters must be 250 words or less, but if you can make your point in 125 words, all the better.

Research indicates that people tend to glaze over when trying to understand a lengthy letter filled

with technical jargon. Explain yourself, make your point, and put it in the mail.

Letter writers are often motivated by anger or frustration, and it shows in the final product. Take time to ponder why you are so angry or frustrated over a particular issue. Don't be sarcastic, and don't get personal.

You don't have to fire off an ill-considered, same-day response. After all, there won't be another paper until next week.

Check and recheck for mistakes. A simple error might change the context of the entire letter.

Above all, pray over your letter and seek God's guidance in what to say and how to say it. "The Baptist Record" has been given to us as a special way to help bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus, so don't forget that you are Christ's representative to everyone who reads your words.

This is your newspaper, and we want to hear from you. Follow these simple suggestions and the established guidelines, and chances are that several hundred thousand Mississippi Baptists will be hearing from you, too!

"ONE THING ABOUT NEW OAK CHURCH — THEY KNOW GOOD PREACHING WHEN THEY HEAR IT!"



A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE — CARL M. WHITE

## Providence and spell check

Somehow, in God's providence, he has seen fit to send me packing once again, only this time not to another church. This time it is to the Baptist Building and "The Baptist Record." What a sense of humor!

Even my daughter thought it funny. She said, "But, Daddy, how can you work for a newspaper? You can't spell!"

"Yes," I replied, "but now God has given us computers with spell checks!"

She did, however, pose an interesting question. I have been called to preach. My only ambition and desire has been to pastor a church. How can I be associate editor of a newspaper?

The Lord provided the answer to that question at my first meeting with the entire professional staff of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

We heard reports — one report after another about the work that is being done. Everyone sat in his chair and listened with varying degrees of interest. I, however, furiously took notes. This was great stuff!

For instance, during the month of July, volunteer mission teams from Mississippi saw 1,796 professions of faith in Honduras and another 1,510 in Venezuela.

Within the state, mission groups from World Changers in Natchez to mission Vacation Bible School groups in Tchula and Woodville saw over 50 persons saved.

That's not all. Between Gulf-shore, Central Hills, and Camp Garaywa, 355 young people made professions of faith.

Did you catch all those numbers? That's almost 2,000 people born again in one month.

This is what "Bringing Mississippi and the world to Jesus" is all about.

For some reason, I seemed to hear all of this a little differently than the rest. That is not to say that the others in the room were not thrilled at this report.

Perhaps it is because this was my first such meeting. For me, it was more. This was a revelation of the will of God and an explanation of why I am not behind a pulpit any more. I am to listen to it all as if I were still a pastor.

A pastor's perspective. That's why God has sent me to this place.

Somehow, between deadlines, interviews, picas, points, and dingbats, it is my assignment to see and report things from a pastor's perspective.

Even if I can't spell.

## Guest opinion...

### "7 Habits" steeped in Mormonism

By Bill Gordon

First of a two-part series

It may come as a surprise to many Baptists, but the popular personal training programs written and promoted by Stephen R. Covey are also meant to subtly promote his Mormon beliefs.

Ironically, one of the reasons his materials, such as "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," are so popular among many Christian leaders is because they give a prominent place to spirituality in personal growth.

Yet, "7 Habits" contains many of the same principles, anecdotes, and illustrations as found in one of Covey's earlier books, "The Divine Center," a book meant to promote Mormon beliefs and show that any spiritual model

other than the Church of Latter-day Saints (LDS), including evangelical Christianity, is a false "map" that limits the personal development of its followers.

Covey explains in "The Divine Center" that he has discovered how to communicate Mormon truths to non-Mormons by simply changing his vocabulary.

He writes, "I have found in speaking to various non-LDS groups in different cultures that we can teach and testify of many gospel principles if we are careful in selecting words which carry our meaning but come from their experience and frame of mind" ("Divine Center," p. 240).

In "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People," Covey writes that he finds renewal in daily meditation on the scriptures, but in "The Divine Center" he identifies the most powerful scriptures in his life as "... the Gospel of John, the epistles of Paul and Peter, the Book of Mormon, and Doctrine and Covenants" (p. 298).

In the same book he writes,

"Cultivate the habit of reading the scripture everyday — perhaps just before retiring. It's better to go to sleep on Helaman or Moroni than on the latest TV talk show" (p. 197).

In addition, "7 Habits" refers to "natural laws in the human dimension that are just as real, as unchanging, and unarguably 'there' as laws such as gravity are in the physical dimension."

What Covey doesn't say in "7 Habits" that he does say in "The Divine Center" is that these "laws of nature" are the teachings of the LDS Church which "enable the individual personality to grow and develop until eventually he can become like his Father in Heaven" (p. 246).

Covey calls the doctrine of the Trinity an "apostate doctrine," which has "led people to believe that we are a creation of God rather than his literal offspring" (p. 82).

Gordon is associate director of the Interfaith Witness Department at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in Atlanta.



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# Johnson, Olsons appointed for service with Foreign Board

Two people with Mississippi connections were among 61 new appointees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (FMB) at an Aug. 14 service at First Church, Woodstock, Ga.

Charles A. (Chuck) Johnson, freelance youth consultant since 1993 for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and a member of First Church, Jackson, will work at the Caribbean Baptist Communications Centre in Hollywood, Fla.

The center provides Caribbean churches with printed and electronic Christian media materials. Johnson will assist the youth department editor in writing and editing Sunday School curriculum materials for teachers and pupils.

Johnson has also served as minister of youth at First Church, Madison; as both FMB and Southern Baptist Home Mission Board summer missionary; and as a special Centrifuge team leader to Switzerland, Scotland, and South Korea.

Johnson was born in Thomas-ton, Ga., and considers Griffin, Ga., his hometown.

Daniel S. (Dan) Olson and his wife Lisa Varnado Griffin, a former French language teacher at Southaven High School in Southaven, have been appointed to the Middle East and North Africa areas, where Dan Olson will pastor an English-language church.

The pair will also be involved in a number of outreach ministries

in an area where Southern Baptists now have radio broadcasting, literature distribution, and correspondence ministries in 12 of the region's political entities.

Dan Olson was born in Portland, Ore., and considers Boring, Ore., his hometown. Lisa Olson was born in Austin, Texas, and

considers Albuquerque, N.M., her hometown.

Johnson and the Olsons join more than 4,200 FMB workers who are sharing Christ among 336 ethnic people groups in 128 countries.

The trio will report to the FMB's training center in

Rockville, Va., in October for a seven-week orientation before leaving for their assignments.

The Southern Baptist Convention is the largest evangelical denomination in the U.S., with 15.4 million members. FMB is the largest evangelical missionary-sending agency in the country.

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

## The Baptist Record

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### Hussein leaves Kuwait in wake of apostasy accusation

By William H. Perkins Jr.

Robert Hussein, the Kuwaiti Christian under a judge's threat of death in his predominantly Muslim home country, has fled Kuwait and is traveling to an as-yet unknown location under a U.S. visa, according to a source closely tracking Hussein's flight from danger.

The source also reported that it is not known whether Hussein will return to Kuwait for a Sept. 15 appeal hearing of a Kuwait religious court's May 29 ruling.

That ruling declared him an apostate of the Muslim religion, and a subsequent June 3 verdict suggested a Muslim cleric order his execution.

Meanwhile, the Kuwait ambassador to the United States has informed U.S. Senator Thad Cochran (R.-Miss.) that the government of Kuwait has publicly affirmed it will guarantee the 45-year-old Hussein's safety.

Mohammed S. Al-Sabah, responding July 29 to a letter of inquiry from Mississippi's senior senator, promised that the Kuwait government will guarantee Hussein's safety.

"I wish to assure you that Mr. Hussein has neither been incarcerated nor sentenced to death by the State as has been reported erroneously," the ambassador wrote.

"Furthermore, though he has been declared an apostate by the Family Court, the only penalty that was imposed on Mr. Hus-

sein was to fine him the nominal court fees," the letter continued.

However, Judge Jaafar Al-Qazvneeni clearly stated in the June 8 family court verdict that Hussein should be executed by a Muslim religious leader for apostasy, according to information reported in July by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mis-

sion Board (FMB).

Family court in Kuwait is governed by religious law in matters pertaining to marriage, divorce, and inheritance. Hussein and his wife are involved in divorce proceedings.

The Kuwaiti ambassador also assured Cochran that Hussein's rights were guaranteed by the country's constitution and that Kuwait "has had and continues to have a very long-standing tradition of religious tolerance and acceptance."

Cochran's inquiry to the Kuwait ambassador was apparently prompted by letters he received from a number of Mississippi Baptists, including Mary Horton of Madison, a member of Broadmoor Church, Jackson.

Horton said she has corresponded with a number of U.S. and Kuwaiti officials about Hussein's plight.

An FMB spokesman was not available at publication deadline. Previous FMB statements have urged Southern Baptists to become involved in Hussein's case by writing:

His Highness Shaikh Saad Al-Sabah; Crown Prince and Prime Minister; The State of Kuwait; P.O. Box 4; Safat, Kuwait 13001; and

Mohammed S. Al-Sabah, Ambassador to the United States; The State of Kuwait Chancery; 2940 Tilden St. NW; Washington, DC 20008.



Robert Hussein



Dan and Lisa Olson



Chuck Johnson

### Department of Mental Health signs option to buy Clarke College

By William H. Perkins Jr.

The Mississippi State Department of Mental Health (DMH) has entered into a \$25,000 option to purchase the Clarke College property in Newton, according to the chairman of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) special committee formed to dispose of the defunct Baptist junior college.

Tupelo businessman Larry Otis reported Aug. 20 that DMH executive director Randy Hendrix signed the exclusive, one-year option and plans to ask the Mississippi Legislature to fund the \$1,000,000 purchase price when that body convenes in January 1997.

DMH plans to convert the

property into a facility for adults age 35 years and older who need limited supervision in a residential setting to conduct their daily lives. Projections indicate that up to 200 jobs will be required to manage the facility.

"DMH will assume maintenance and security on the Clarke College property, thus saving the Mississippi Baptist Convention those costs during the time prior to legislative action," Otis said.

Messengers to the 1995 MBC session directed the special committee to reserve from any sale of the Clarke College property one acre of land with a house for the use by the school's alumni association.

### Arson fund disbursement to states nearing \$300,000

NASHVILLE (BP) — Fourteen state Baptist conventions received nearly \$50,000 when the Executive Committee business office Aug. 2 released additional funds from the "Arson Fund" to assist African American churches victimized by arsonists.

Coupled with the initial distribution July 3 of \$246,712 to 12 state conventions, the Arson Fund gifts which have been distributed from the SBC office now total \$293,746, according to Jack Wilkerson, Executive Committee vice president for

business and finance. Two state conventions — Arizona and the Northwest (Oregon-Washington) — received gifts during the August distribution in addition to the previous 12 of July.

The Arson Fund is primarily from an offering taken at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans in June. That offering came at the request of then-SBC President Jim Henry, Orlando, Fla., pastor, and raised \$282,000 in pledges and cash gifts.

Wilkerson said funds from the pledges at

the New Orleans meeting are continuing to arrive at the Nashville office, as well as gifts from churches throughout the SBC sent through normal channels as designated gifts.

The August distribution of \$47,034 went to: Alabama, \$3,950; Arizona, \$564; Arkansas, \$2,304; Florida, \$1,693; Georgia, \$1,128; Louisiana, \$5,126; Mississippi, \$3,950; North Carolina, \$4,515; Northwest, \$1,128; Oklahoma, \$564; South Carolina, \$9,642; Tennessee, \$4,515; Texas, \$6,819; and Virginia, \$1,128.

In addition to the monies, Southern Baptist construction crews are volunteering to rebuild the burned churches. At least four state Baptist conventions have sent crews to churches in need and the SBC Brotherhood Commission is attempting to contact each of the fire-damaged congregations to assess the level of need.

Donations to the Church Rebuilding Fund may be sent directly to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.





Sixty-three area students took part in the fifth annual Creativity Exploration hosted by the William Carey College Center for Creative Scholars on the Hattiesburg campus recently. This program allows 2nd through 12th grade students to explore, evaluate, and further develop their creative talents through poetry, creative writing, art, and photography. The efforts of the youth will be displayed in "The Voice of Gifted Youth," a customary newspaper publication produced and edited by the students themselves upon completion of the event.

## Plans set for all-state orchestra

Graham Smith, director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Church Music Department, announced the organization of a statewide orchestra.

The orchestra will hold its first rehearsal during the Church Orchestra Festival on Saturday, Jan. 18, at Broadmoor Church, Jackson.

The all-state orchestra will be featured in a performance on Monday night, Jan. 27, at the evangelism conference, also held at Broadmoor Church.

Bruce Zeiger, minister of music at Calvary Church, New Orleans, is the orchestra's director.

According to Smith, the idea for a statewide orchestra came from the Church Orchestra Festival Commit-

tee. The Music Department sponsors this annual festival to help encourage and strengthen church instrumental programs. The 1996 festival was held at Crossgates Church, Brandon, with over 70 participants.

The all-state orchestra will be the second statewide music organization, joining the All State Youth Choir, which began 1992. The 1994 all-state choir, which had over 90 members, added an instrumental ensemble.

Persons interested in the all state orchestra should contact Graham Smith at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside Jackson, (800) 748-1651.

# Southern Seminary's new dean Akin predicts better days ahead

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) — The turmoil that has plagued Southern Seminary in recent years is nearing an end, predicts the school's new second-in-command.

"Good days are ahead," Danny Akin, vice president for academic affairs and dean of theology, said in a recent interview. "I pray that the turmoil the school is going through will come to an end."

As students prepare to return to classes in August, Akin is beginning to settle in to his new role. He and his family moved to Louisville, Ky., this summer from Wake Forest, N.C., where he was dean of students and a professor at Southeastern Seminary.

There he witnessed his share of academic turmoil as he worked alongside President Paige Patterson to rebuild a seminary which had lost half its enrollment after trustees turned the traditionally moderate school radically to the right.

At Southern, Akin succeeds David Dockery, who left to become president of Union University in Jackson, Tenn.

While Akin acknowledges that Southern Seminary has endured trauma in the first three years of a new administration, he predicted smoother waters are ahead. Southern is becoming a "warm, evangelical seminary" that emphasizes both learning and doing, he said.

"Our vision is to produce students who are like Paul — with keen minds and warm, evangelical hearts," Akin explained. "Paul was the greatest theologian who ever lived, but also the greatest missionary who ever lived."

The biggest challenge to face

the seminary recently, the crisis which precipitated closing of the Carver School of Church Social Work, was an unfortunate turn of events but inevitable, Akin allowed.

"I am a big advocate of social ministry," he explained. "Though the Carver School will be closing, I have a strong commitment to carry on the best of what it represented."

Southern Seminary must not produce only preachers but all types of ministers to meet the needs of hurting people, Akin said. Social ministry, for example, is essential to reach the inner cities, which he laments Southern Baptists have made a "big mistake" by abandoning.

Akin said he is committed to ensuring that all the seminary's schools — theology, Christian education, church music and Billy Graham School of Evangelism, Church Growth and Missions — do well.

"I don't have a list of people I want to get rid of," he said. "I'm committed to working with everyone who's here."

However, Akin said he's under no illusion that all the remaining faculty members intend to stay. In the past three years, the seminary has lost 44 faculty members, and others have said privately that they are seeking other employment.

To fill faculty vacancies, Akin

said he intends to help the administration recruit "the finest evangelical scholars out there."

He also will be active in recruiting students, he said, explaining that he has begun meeting personally with every prospective student who visits the campus.

"I want any student to feel welcome to come to Southern Seminary — including those who would not always agree with me on every point of doctrine," he said.

Despite the new administration's image as being hostile to women in ministry, Akin said he encourages women to come to Southern. And while he does not believe women should be senior pastors, most female students should enroll in the master of divinity degree program, he said.

Akin admits his job as a salesman and administrator is challenging.

"We've got to overcome a negative perception," he said. "We've got to re-establish trust with certain portions of Baptist life. I understand that as a legitimate demand."

One area needing renewed trust is the relationship between the seminary and Kentucky Baptists, Akin said.

Akin said he is developing a good relationship with seminary President Albert Mohler, a person he did not know well before taking this job.

While Akin is not a five-point Calvinist like Mohler and holds a slightly different view of the end-times, "we are on the same playing field theologically," he said.



Akin

## Evangelists' Profile

This space is dedicated to Mississippi men and women who have committed themselves to vocational evangelism. Churches are encouraged to take advantage of their talents in helping to reap the harvest.

### This week's evangelist

Myrna Loy Hedgepeth  
Jackson

Years in Ministry: 20.

Education: Hinds Community College, Mississippi College, additional vocal study at Belhaven College.

Places of service: Nine states; Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Jamaica, Bahamas, Mexico.

Focal ministry: Sermon in song.

Personal: Very active in prayer ministry and in Colonial Heights Baptist Church choir, she sang her first solo in church at age 6 and was featured on local television from age 13-20. She is past president of the MacDowell Music Club, of the Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists, and was music director for Southern Baptist Bureau for 11 years.

Matthew 13:12 "What while happiness depends on the openings, joy depends on Jesus."

Address/telephone: Myrna Loy Hedgepeth  
5810 Fallview Drive  
Jackson, MS 39211  
(601) 956-3589

For more information or to be included in this space, contact Jimmy Knight, president, Conference of Mississippi Baptist Evangelists, 25 Melody Lane, Laurel, MS 39440.



## Summer service at Garaywa

Young women who served as summer counselors at Camp Garaywa in Clinton are (left to right): front row, Amy Buckley of Mississippi College (MC); Hope Lang, MC; Mandy Avis, MC; Christy Fortner, Mississippi State University (MSU); America Wise, William Carey College (WCC); Jammey Aaron, Pearl River Community College; Tina Vineyard, MC; Gretchen Leake, MC; Autumn Hicks, MC; Michelle Herrin, WCC; second row, Mandy McBeth, University of Southern Mississippi (USM); Jennifer Baker, Delta State University (DSU); Jency Plunkett, Northeast Mississippi Community College (NMCC); Angela Moak, Southwest Mississippi Community College; Jennifer Cottingham, USM; Meta Blanchard, WCC;

April Stringer, WCC; Michelle Prentiss, MC; Joannah Johnsey, Louisiana State University; third row, Julie Anderson, Jones County Junior College; Maegan Bryant, USM; Joy Thompson, NMCC; Christi Johnson, NMCC; Stephanie Day, University of Mississippi Medical Center; Emily Coker, USM; Kelly Anderson, Blue Mountain College; Stephanie Hill, MSU; April Taylor, WCC; Brandy Whiteen, MSU; back row, Juanita West, summer director; Michelle Roberts, MC; Amanda Cooke, Mississippi Delta Community College; Laurie Jones, MSU; Wendy Gordon, Pensacola Christian College; Jennifer Jones, MC; Erica Clark, MC; and Beth Morgan, DSU. Not pictured are Sharon Posey and Olivia Taylor.



# Two Sebastopol short-term vols bolster Bolivian work

By Tom Martin

"It was like coming home!" exclaimed Wade Fisher when asked about his experiences working as a short-term volunteer in Bolivia. Fisher and friend, Jonathan Sharp, both of Sebastopol, worked alongside career missionaries Tom and Cynthia Martin for eight weeks during the summer months.

Their primary assignment was to train young people in rural churches and preaching points southwest of Santa Cruz to understand how to grow spiritually and to share their faith.

Fisher participated in a volunteer trip to the same area of Bolivia in 1992. After returning home with a love for the Hispanic people he became burdened with the needs of the large Hispanic population moving into Scott County.

He looked to Sharp to help him meet their spiritual and physical needs and began a ministry to the Spanish-speaking migrant and

chicken plant workers.

With such motivation the young men learned Spanish quickly and began inviting their new friends to their church in Sebastopol. They began by translating the sermons until the number of Hispanics attending required having their own Sunday School class.

As the ministry grew it became evident that the Hispanics needed their own place of worship. Aided by leaders and churches in Scott County Association, Fisher and Sharp led the Hispanic believers in starting The Good Shepherd Baptist Church in Forest.

This experience in church planting and their ability to speak Spanish fluently led to the invitation to work in Santa Cruz.

"Having had my experience with Hispanic people in Scott County, I wanted to go to a Spanish-speaking country to participate in missions first-hand. I really didn't know what to expect but

I knew that I wanted to share my faith with others," Sharp said.

The young men lived for three to four days at a time in the homes of believers and taught a simple course on prayer and witnessing based on Paul's conversion experience.

Because of the study almost 40 young people were trained. In one church the two were asked to split up to speak in two different Sunday School classes.

Planning to teach the prepared study on sharing a testimony, they began by asking about the conversion experiences of their students. When they asked for participation they realized that none of the youth had ever made a profession of faith.

We couldn't teach them to share something that they had never experienced," said Sharp.

This led to them leading five of the youth to making a profession of faith.

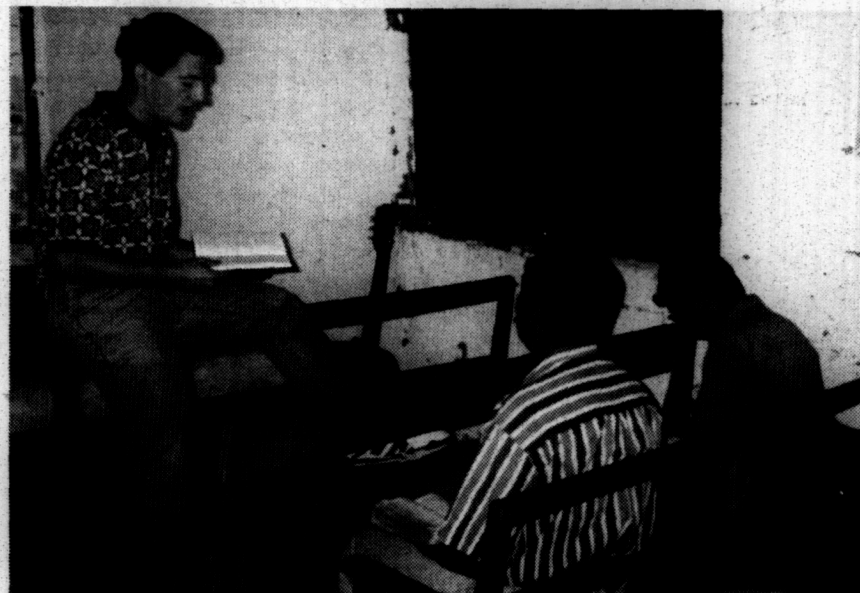
In addition to leading studies in churches, Fisher and Sharp accepted invitations to speak in four public high schools. They used a combination of drama and testimony to share their faith with young people who do not attend an evangelical church.

At the conclusion of each program the two young men were swamped with the teens who asked them to stay longer to sing, visit, and play soccer or basketball.

They also participated in evangelistic campaigns. In one of the nightly campaigns, they spoke and sang to more than 200 persons in outdoor services.

Another campaign was held in the remote village of Las Lagunitas. The services were held in the community mud brick school house.

More than 40 men, women,



Wade Fisher of Sebastopol leads a Bible study during his short-term (eight weeks) volunteer stint in Bolivia.

and children crowded into the tiny one-room school building. As Fisher and Sharp shared about Christ they saw many interested faces illuminated by the one lantern hanging about them.

The next day Fisher accompanied one of the believers for several kilometers as he invited his friends to the next evangelistic service.

Sharp had the joy of working alongside several of the young people he helped train as they passed out more than 1,500 tracts to people in an open air market.

Along with the tracts, evangelistic videos were presented in the market place, attracting as many as 40 people at a time. At the end of the day an invitation to accept Christ as Savior was given.

This work in the market is important in reaching rural people who live in places where there is no evangelistic work. They come to the market to buy and sell every Sunday. While there were no decisions today many seeds

were planted. We'll just have to watch and see how God is at work," explained missionary Tom Martin.

While Fisher and Sharp were a long way from home, they showed that the love of Christ can cross any cultural barrier.

God gave me a love for Hispanics on my last trip to Bolivia. I couldn't wait to return. Although I see lots of needs here I've learned that I can't change everything," said Fisher "but I'll continue to do what I can."

The enthusiasm of the young men will have a real lasting effect on a great number of youth in Bolivia.

"We are grateful to Sebastopol Church for their help in bringing Jonathan and Wade here," said missionary Cynthia Martin. "We always see great things happen when volunteers come, especially young people."

Martin, a Mississippi native, is a Southern Baptist missionary to Bolivia.



Sebastopol native Jonathan Sharp served alongside Mississippi missionaries Tom and Cynthia Martin in Bolivia for eight weeks this summer.

## Restoring Gillsburg parsonage turns into community effort

By June Gilbert

*Editor's note: The following is adapted from an article that appeared in the McComb "Enterprise-Journal."*

Three months ago members of Gillsburg Church, Osyka, were faced with a tough decision. They were about to hire a new youth/music minister and needed a place to house him.

The question was: Move the old parsonage across the street and replace it with a new house trailer? Or sink unknown dollars into restoring the old building?

On May 26 of this year, members of the church turned out for an open house and tour of the restored parsonage, dedicating the parsonage restoration to the memory of John Norman Honea, a member of the committee which headed up the restoration.

"It was a tough decision to make," said Brian Tyndall, pastor at Gillsburg. "The building and grounds committee met and toured the house. We thought it would take at least \$20,000 to restore it."

Three months later, the restored house, which cost \$40,000, sparkles.

From the beginning, the church membership was cooperative.

"We didn't have the money in the bank to pay for it and we knew the church and community would have to help," Tyndall said. "A lot gave. Some gave \$5, some \$20, some \$1,000 or more. A lot were people who were not members any more, but had ties to the community or the old parsonage."

Then there were the members who cleaned in the house and yard, tore down the old chimney, and helped where they could. Tyndall noted the efforts of the committee members and in particular Jean Stewart and the late John Norman Honea, who died March 29.

"The very morning after we voted to restore the house, John Norman was there tearing out the bathroom, getting it ready for a carpenter," Tyndall said. "I remember he told me, 'I'm good at tearing out, I'm not that good at

building, but I can tear it out.'

"When we started planning the open house, I thought of John Norman, but Dennis Wilson, deacon, suggested it first. A lot of comments were made to me after it was suggested, but the thing that stood out was that from the moment the church voted to undertake the restoration, he was 100% positive. He was there saying if you're going to do it, don't do it halfway. Just do it right."

Jean Stewart, seated on the new plaid couch in the newly painted front parlor of the parsonage, remembered the hard work and laughed about what her husband Kenneth said one night after a full day of working on the parsonage.

"I looked up at him and said, 'The Lord saw this finished before we even started it'; he looked and me and said, 'I sure hope he saw it this way; 'cause we're certainly not going to change it.'"

Gilbert is features editor for the McComb "Enterprise-Journal."



The old Gillsburg parsonage, built in the early 1900s, housed until 1947 the pastor of both the Gillsburg and Mout Vernon churches. It sat empty for 18 years in the shadow of the church's newer parsonage, until work to restore it began this spring. After church members replaced peeling paint, mildewed paneling, and soot-producing gas heaters, the landmark house was restored to its former shine. Outside the house on its dedication day (from left), are Brian Tyndall, pastor; Opal Honea; Kenneth Stewart; and Jean Stewart. Honea displays the plaque dedicating the parsonage to the memory of her husband, the late John Norman Honea.





# Letters to the editor



## Letters to the Editor policy

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used. Each correspondent must include an address, telephone number, and the name of his or her church. In special instances, when to identify the writer of a letter might cause undue embarrassment, the name will be withheld at writer's request or editor's discretion. Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing. Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a one-month period. In the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient correspondence dealing with it will be no longer be published.

## Gambling on the rise

Editor:

A recent study reveals that while 70,000,000 Americans attend Major League Baseball games every year, about 120 million go to casinos. In 20 years, the amount of money legally wagered in this country has skyrocketed 2,800%, from \$17 billion in 1974 to \$482 billion in 1994.

The evils of gambling are in plain evidence in areas where casinos exist. The spread of gambling in Mississippi, which is located in the Bible Belt of this nation, happened overnight when no one apparently was watching, and according to the news media, new casinos are being constructed regularly across the state. The bright lights and publicized entertainment in these casinos are an enticement for increased numbers of people to become involved in gambling.

I strongly urge Christians to pray that eyes will be opened to see and acknowledge gambling to be satanically designed to destroy lives, and that it will be exposed and opposed.

Furthermore, concerned Christians are encouraged to pray for those addicted to gambling to see their plight and to earnestly desire and seek freedom through the mercy and help of the Lord.

Paul Wilson  
Nettleton

## Marking milestones

Editor:

Among its many responsibilities, the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission has the delightful opportunity to assist Mississippi Baptist churches celebrate significant anniversaries.

During its summer session, the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission observed that five Mississippi Baptist churches had already celebrated centennial anniversaries this year. Nine others are also 100 years old and are encouraged to plan special celebrations if they have not yet done so. In addition, nine of our churches are 125 years old. Three of those have already celebrated this significant anniversary and in all likelihood, others are seriously planning a significant celebration for this memorable achievement.

Eleven Mississippi Baptist churches have reached the sesquicentennial. Three of those have celebrated that milestone; another

has a celebration planned in Oct. and the remaining seven are encouraged by the commission to do so. One of this number, First Church, Pontotoc, has been involved in an ongoing, extensive array of sesquicentennial activities.

Two churches, each 175 years old, Old Hebron in Jeff Davis County, scheduled a July celebration; and in March, Mt. Moriah in Lincoln County celebrated this significant event.

The grand total of years served by current Mississippi Baptist churches in quarter-century segments of the centennial; 125 years; sesquicentennial; or 175 years old is 4,525.

Edward L. McMillan  
Executive Secretary  
Miss. Baptist Historical Comm.  
Clinton

## Kudos for evangelism

Editor:

I would like to commend the members and staff of Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, for the Evangelism Explosion Clinic they hosted July 12-17. I cannot think of anything that has impacted my life like this clinic. It placed a burning fire of desire to be an active witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have never seen a clinic that went as smoothly as this one. It was this church's faithfulness that made this week as impacting as it was. The meals, the lodging, and many volunteers who helped in this clinic were wonderful. From meeting with my own personal prayer partners to going out and actually doing evangelism, this pastor could tell that evangelism was their heartbeat. I could not have even gone without the scholarship that was made available by this church.

I was most impressed with the training of their lay people, and lay people from surrounding churches who took us out three nights to train us on what they had learned. I saw ordinary people do extraordinary things for the Lord Jesus Christ. They knew how to share the gospel. They depended mightily on the Lord as they went out. Because of their effort, in three nights we saw 32 people come to Christ. God did the saving but these volunteers did the sharing. Praise the Lord!

I am excited about the possibilities in my own church. We plan to start this ministry in the fall.

There is one thing that I know. If I need help, I have a church in Clinton on whom I can call.

Johnny Beaver, pastor  
Bethlehem Church, Morton

## Seeking a pastor

Editor:

International Baptist Church, Giessen, Germany, is looking for a new pastor as of Feb. 1, 1997. The church requests your assistance in making our needs known to any individual who feels led to minister to a multi-cultural English speaking community here in Giessen.

Inquiries should be addressed to Louis Smith, director; Church/Minister Relations Dept.; Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; P.O. Box 530; Jackson, MS 39205.

Willy de Winter, chairman  
Pastor Search Committee  
Giessen, Germany

## ABP responds

Editor:

Ken Dawson's letter in the July 11 "Baptist Record" concerning Associated Baptist Press (ABP) contains misleading statements that could confuse Mississippi Baptists if left unchallenged.

First, he alleges "bias" in ABP's report on the impact of Jim Henry's presidency. There has been conflict in the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) between moderates and conservatives, and two clearly-defined factions backed presidential candidates in elections throughout the 1980s. That tension is played out in a more subdued form in the 1990s between conservatives who feel Convention leaders should strongly support the reform agenda of the so-called "conservative resurgence" and others who believe the time has come for the Convention to be more inclusive. All this has been discussed openly by SBC leaders. If that sounds to Dawson like "a hostile takeover by a small, aberrant group," it is his inference.

Second, he says ABP "legitimized" a comment that the Convention needs "a wide open election process." In fact, what the story did was accurately quote Jim Henry's statement to that effect. Henry subsequently picked up on that theme in his president's address at the SBC annual meeting. The ABP story also quoted individuals who disagree with Henry and no attempt was made to "legitimate" one point of view over the other.

Third, he criticizes another story about a hiring dispute at Louisiana College, alleging "negative inference" and an attempt to "stereotype" a conservative trustee. The story accurately describes charges brought against trustees by disgruntled faculty. An attempt was made to interview the trustee chair, but he declined to defend the board because discussion was

held in an executive session.

A final allegation in Dawson's letter is that "things that are positive about our convention are almost always portrayed in a negative way by the ABP." In fact, ABP feels no responsibility to cast any of our stories in either a positive or negative light. If there are two sides to a story, we intend to report them both.

Bob Allen  
Associate executive editor  
Associated Baptist Press

## Now Bibliocipher fan

Editor:

For a long time I looked at the Bibliocipher puzzle appearing each week on the back page of "The Baptist Record," and wondered what value this had for your readers.

During a recent senior adult retreat at the Gulfshore Assembly, I met the affable and talented author of this feature, Charles Marx. He taught me how to read and solve these formidable looking puzzles. This is an excellent and a wonderful way to learn verses from the Bible. This exciting challenge provides a new dimension to Bible study as I work the puzzles.

Now that I am a Bibliocipher fan, I can hardly wait until the next issue of "The Baptist Record" comes. I challenge other readers to learn the secret of solving these interesting puzzles. It is both fascinating and helpful. Thank you for carrying this delightful feature, which makes a good paper even better.

W. Levon Moore  
Kosciusko

## Time to take stand

Editor:

Much has been written lately about intolerance. It has become a synonym for racism, bigotry, self-righteousness, and hypocrisy. It is not politically correct to be intolerant.

There seems to be a concerted effort to put our churches to sleep regarding these and other issues. (You may split as many hairs as you like as to whether these are political or moral issues — all wrongdoing is rooted in immorality.) Too many pastors are not taking a stand. Instead they are preaching "tolerance." They are straddling that fence of political correctness, afraid of being labeled fanatics or, worse yet, fundamentalists.

We need more leaders who will take a stand. We need more Christians who are willing to take the consequences for their convictions. Let's take up our pens. Let's call our congressman. Let's hold our church leaders accountable for the quality of their leadership.

The Jesus who preached love and forgiveness is the same Jesus who threw the racketeers out of the Temple and blasted the religious

authorities for being "blind leaders of the blind." The Jesus who said "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone" is the same Jesus who outlined sin more minutely and condemned it more forcefully than anyone had ever done before. These are not inconsistencies. Forgiveness is for the sinner, but sin is not to be tolerated.

Christians, unite! Let us be at peace with each other and at war with the world. Jesus came not to bring peace but a sword, and he promises that anyone who suffers for following him will be rewarded. When he returns, and that may be sooner than we think, let us be found doing his will.

Debra Diaz  
New Albany

## Choose godly values

Editor:

I'm writing this in response to the July 11 letter to the editor by David Frazier. My husband and I have two small children who love Mickey Mouse, but if we as parents allow anything to replace godly values in our home, then we have failed in our service to God and to our children.

Truly, I am constantly reminded through Frazier and others like him, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). Also, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve;... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

Penny Watkins  
Tylertown

## Once upon a time...

Editor:

It must have been 20 years ago when some Disney-loving messenger to one of our convention meetings stood at a mike and moved that we ask Disney to change "The Wonderful World of Disney" to another night. Since it came on Sunday nights at 6 p.m., he said, Baptists weren't able to watch it since we were all in church!

Well, our people must be staying home to watch it now, because fewer and fewer are at Sunday night church; the world never has set its agenda or its schedule to our liking; and why does that keep surprising us?

Joe McKeever, pastor  
First Church  
Kenner, La.

## Editor's Note

As of today's issue, a total of seven news articles, two guest opinions, and 12 letters have dealt with the Disney resolution. It is time to move on with other issues in "Letters to the Editor," so no more Disney letters will be printed until further notice.



# Retirement realized, S. McComb pastor "shucking down to the cob"

By Ernest Herndon

(Editor's note: Millican is chairman of the Mississippi Baptist Board of Ministerial Education. The following is adapted from an article in the McComb "Enterprise Journal".)

A few years ago when retirement came into focus, David Millican began shucking down to the cob in his weekly church bulletins.

"I decided I'm going to write some real substance in my views," said Millican, 61, who retired on July 14. "I'm going to let them know exactly how I feel."

So how does he feel?

"I just feel like, frankly, we're in a sick society when we will pay the enormous salaries for people to play ball, for people to sing obscene songs," declared the white-haired, suspender-wearing preacher. "We pay those people more than we pay our educational leaders."

On paper Millican may come across as a fire-breathing rabble-rouser, but that's a far cry from Millican the man.

"He's a person that doesn't like any controversy," said Jewel Rushing, who was on the South McComb Church pastor search committee that hired Millican 33 years ago. "He's kind of a peacemaker. I know he's really emotional with the people in that church, as I've noticed when he preached a sermon or had to say good-bye. He's just gotten to be a part of everybody's family down there."

"I've never met a pastor of a community and a church any better than he is," added church member Ray Scott, who helped organize the retirement program for Millican.

Millican was reared dirt-poor in Alabama.

"I lived there when I entered the ministry at 19. My being called to the ministry was significant for me coming out of that background. If you had told me when I was a teen-ager living in that housing project that I'd have a letter from the governor congratulating me on my work and that I'd have a building named in my honor, I'd have thought that was a dream world," Millican said.

Millican got his bachelor's degree from William Carey College in 1958, his master of divinity from New Orleans Seminary in 1964, and his doctor of ministry from Luther Rice Seminary in 1983.

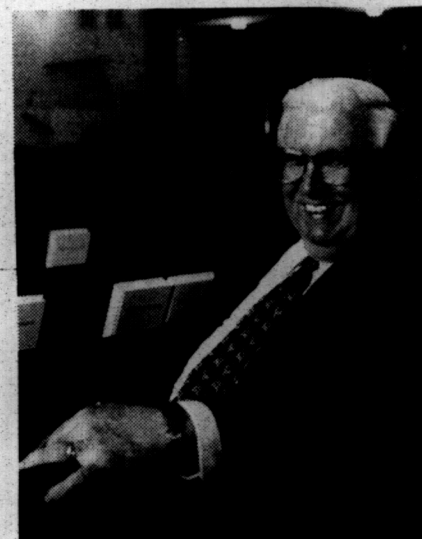
He was at First Church in Stonewall when the pastor search committee arrived from South McComb in 1963.

Since coming to McComb, Millican has baptized 591 people — three generations, in fact. In his 42-year career he's officiated at 1,100 funerals, married 452 couples, and conducted 235 revivals. He's also seen the construction of all new buildings at South McComb.

"South McComb — that's the joy of my life," Millican said.

By now most folks realize that Millican the writer and Millican the man are two different creatures. He uses writing to sound off, to amuse, to shock — but also to edify. In 1982 he published a book entitled "Bible Readings and a Thought for a Day," and has written numerous articles for Southern Baptist publications.

He's considering compiling some of his writings into another book after retirement. He'll continue his 15-year career as hospital



Millican

chaplain at Southwest Mississippi Regional Medical Center.

Millican's sun-bright office is on the fifth floor in the new wing at Southwest — not that he spends much time there.

"Every patient gets a visit from me or the volunteers," said Millican, who coordinates 30-40 volunteers, mostly pastors, from a wide array of area churches.

One thing he won't be doing after retirement is traveling overseas. Millican has gone on short-term mission trips to Argentina, South Korea, and three times to the Philippines, as recently as last year.

Whether in a jungle village, high-rise office or Baptist pulpit, Millican sees only one solution to society's ills: "Win people to Christ. That's the only hope."

"I plan to preach somewhere every Sunday, send my tithe to South McComb Church, pray for my pastor and my church every day, and minister to the sick at Southwest Regional. That's my retirement. I've earned it, I've worked for it, and if the Lord wills it, I'm going to enjoy it," he said.

Herndon is a staff writer for the McComb "Enterprise-Journal."

## N. Delta serves home field

North Delta Association recently sponsored its 15th mission trip to Arizona. A group of 22 men (pictured) took three vans and drove straight through to Phoenix from Clarksdale to help repair a church in Filmore, Ariz. "It is a Baptist church with a large social ministry and housing complex meeting the needs of the needy and homeless people in the area. Much of the work was repairing the facilities, adding a porch, putting drop ceilings in some rooms, repairing the roof, and painting," said M.C. Johnson, director of missions for North Delta Association.

## Revival Results

Rocky Point, Carthage: July 28-Aug. 3; five professions of

faith; Jim Hill, evangelist; Jim Hill family, music; William Wright, pastor.

Paul Truitt Memorial Baptist Church — Pearl, Miss.

will celebrate their

50th Anniversary Sept. 14-15, 1996.

We are searching for former Staff and Church members. Write us at 3705

Old Brandon Road, Pearl, MS 39208

or call us at (601) 939-2975.

All former members and friends are urged to remember these dates: Sept. 14-15.

Longview, Starkville: July 14-19; four professions of faith; J. Frank Smith, McComb, evangelist; Steve and Becky Carver, Starkville, music; Donald I. Pouns, pastor.

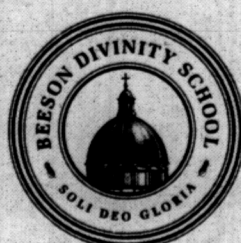
Liberty (Mississippi): Aug. 4-7; 14 professions of faith; two by letter; Jerry Swimmer, Iuka, evangelist; Tony Hinton, Wesson, music; Martin Hayden, pastor.

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## BR posts deadlines

"The Baptist Record" (BR) posts the following deadlines:

For news items: deadline is Thursday noon prior to the following Thursday's publication. Example: in order for an item to appear in the Sept. 12 issue, it must be received in the BR office by noon on Sept. 5.

The item must be typed or written clearly (with all pertinent facts included), and submitted by mail. Include a contact name and phone number in case a question arises.

Photographs should also be submitted by mail. People and activities depicted in the photo should be clearly described and identified. Black and white photos are preferred; high-contrast, well-lighted color photos are acceptable. Polaroid photos do not reproduce well and should be avoided.

For advertising: to reserve paid advertising space, deadline is two weeks prior to the desired publication date. Example: in order to be included in the Sept. 12 issue, space should be reserved with the advertising coordinator by noon on Aug. 29.

Ad materials are due in the BR office 10 calendar days prior to publication.

For churches which print "special" front pages: camera-ready pages are due to the Jackson office of Cain Lithographers by noon on Tuesday prior to the Thursday publication date. Example: for the Sept. 12 edition, churches should have their camera-ready "special" pages to Cain Lithographers by noon, Sept. 10. (Note: churches who request changes made to camera-ready pages by Cain Lithographers will be assessed a \$25 fee.)

For more information, contact "The Baptist Record" at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205. Telephone: (601) 968-3800, or toll-free outside Jackson, (800) 748-1651.



## Just for the Record



The combined youth choirs of Rocky Creek Church, Lucedale, and Arlington Heights Church, Pascagoula, recently returned from a joint choir tour/mission trip to Pensacola, Tampa, and Bradenton, Fla., as well as several churches in South Mississippi. The group was comprised of 55 youths and 15 adults. Backyard Bible Clubs were conducted for three days in Bradenton, leading 30 children to Christ.



Twenty-three members of the Moses Sunday School Class of First Church, Hazlehurst, composed of blind and handicapped members, went on their annual class trip to Nashville, July 3-6. The trip was the 10th for the class.

A gospel concert featuring the Martins and Country Praise will be held at Zion Hill Church, Wes-

son, Aug. 31 at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Billy Ashley at (601) 643-5847.

## Homecomings

**New Hope, Tupelo:** Aug. 25: Lyndle Davis, former pastor, guest speaker at 10:45 a.m. service; covered dish lunch served followed by afternoon singing; Lowell Johnson, pastor.

**Bartahatchie (Monroe):** Sept. 15: worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal; singing, 1 p.m.; Master Design, guest singers; Mike Adcock, pastor.

**Bethel, Hazlehurst:** Aug. 25: worship service, 11 a.m.; John Cato, guest speaker; lunch fol-

lowed by afternoon service; Phil Mullens, pastor.

**Moak's Creek, Summit:** 126th anniversary; Aug. 25; 11 a.m.; noon meal; 1 p.m. singing; Bill J. Howse, pastor, speaker.

**Short Creek, Yazoo City:** Aug. 25, 11 a.m.; lunch in fellowship hall; R.B. McNeer, former pastor for 30 years, speaker; Darrell Harrison, music; Kathleen Bloom, pianist; Cindy Harrison, organist; Norris Ables, pastor.

## Children's Village seeks resident care workers

There is an immediate need for mature, Christian couples and singles to serve as child care workers in the Mississippi Baptist Children's Village Chemical Dependency Program.

Applicants must be in good physical and emotional health, and be prepared to accept a 24-hour-per-day residential assignment with children.

No previous experience is required. Salary, room, board, insurance, and retirement benefits are furnished.

For more information on this opportunity for vocational Christian service, contact Perry Taylor, The Baptist Children's Village, P.O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39056-0027.

## New leaders appointed at Wm. Carey on the Coast

Two new administrative appointments were announced Aug. 8 by William Carey College (WCC) as the institution begins a leadership transition at its Gulf Coast operations during the 1996-97 academic year.

Patricia Pinson has been named associate dean of WCC on the Coast, and Denise Brown will assume new responsibilities as director of academic services on the coast campus.

Prior to joining WCC in 1995,

Pinson served for 26 years on the faculty and administration of Union University in Jackson, Tenn.

Brown recently retired as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force — stationed at Keesler Air Force Base — following a distinguished military career. She has previously taught graduate and undergraduate courses at WCC in nutrition, health care management, strategic policy, and business ethics.

## Staff Changes

**First Church, Leakesville,** has called **Tony Daughtry** as minister of youth, effective June 30. A native of Memphis, he received his education at William Carey College. His previous place of service was Sandy Hook Church.

**Tylertown Church, Walthall Association,** called **David L. Rader** as minister of education, effective Aug. 5. A native of Baton Rouge, La., he received his education at McNeese State University and Southwestern Seminary. He previously served in Fort Worth.

**Wiley Reid**, pastor at **Friendship Church, Brookhaven**, announced his retirement to be effective on Sept. 2. A special service will be held in his honor on Sept. 1. Following the 11 a.m. worship service, there will be a dinner on the grounds and an afternoon song service. Talmadge Smith will be the guest speaker for

the afternoon service. Reid has pastored Friendship Church, Brookhaven, for 27 of his 41 years in the ministry. Reid will be available for interim work and revivals after Oct. 1. His address will be Rt. 7, Box 413, Brookhaven, MS 39601; telephone (601) 532-6201.

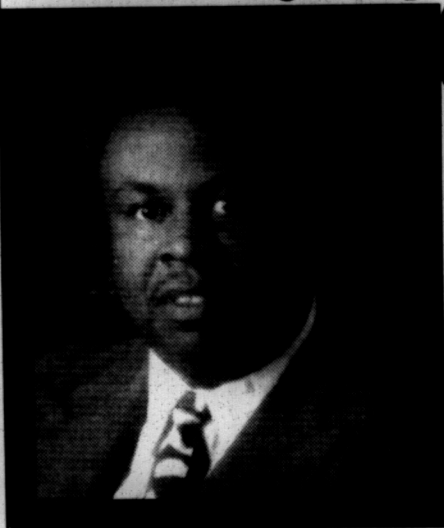
**Fellowship Church, Starkville**, has called **J.E. Sims** as pastor, effective Aug. 15. He received his education at William Carey College and Bethany Theological Seminary, with additional graduate work at Mississippi State University and the University of Mississippi. His previous place of service was Immanuel Church, Columbus.

**Fred Lawrence** joined the staff of **First Church, Charleston**, as interim pastor effective July 21.

## Come Rejoice With Us

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Colonial Heights Baptist Church presents



**Dr. Joe Ratliff**

**August 26 at 7:00PM**

**Admission is Free**

**Summer Spectacular**

Colonial Heights Baptist Church  
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Dr. Richard A. Powell, Pastor



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## Southern Seminary will host evangelists' congress

The Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and the evangelism section of the Home Mission Board (HMB) will sponsor the second National Congress for Southern Baptist Evangelists (NCSBE), Jan. 13-15, 1997, on the campus of Southern Seminary.

NCSBE '97 will offer 20 workshops for evangelists led by some of the outstanding directors.

"This congress was designed by Southern Baptist evangelists to address our personal, practical, and professional needs. A unique aspect of NCSBE '97 is the workshops planned for the wives. We are also inviting pastors with a heart for evangelism to attend. Workshops aimed at helping them to build stronger evangelistic churches will be offered," said Jerry Drace, program director.

In addition to the 20-plus workshops, there will be eight plenary sessions featuring Robert Coleman, Drace, Roy Fish, Steve Hale, Richard Harris, Anne Graham Lotz, Stephen Olford, and Glenn Sheppard.

Anne Graham Lotz will speak at a luncheon on Jan. 14 for the evangelists' wives and women in the Louisville area.

Reservations will be limited due to space. The registration fee is \$50 for each pastor and \$80 if both pastor and wife attend. Checks should be made payable to NCSBE '97 in care of Jerry Drace Evangelistic Association, 236 Sanders Bluff Rd., Humboldt, TN 38343.

Billy Graham said concerning NCSBE '97, "I encourage you to attend NCSBE '97. The '82 Congress was a real blessing to me and other members of our team. I know this one will be equally uplifting."

## Revival Dates

**First, Durant:** Aug. 25-28; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Sonny Adkins, evangelist; Danny Brock, music; Dan Watts, pastor.

**Siloam, Magee:** Aug. 25-28; homecoming, Sunday, 11 a.m.; noon meal; guest speaker, Paul Roberts, former pastor, Magee; revival, Sunday, 1 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; Jerry Sullivan, Magee, evangelist; Gerald Aultman, pastor.

**Calvary, Durant:** Aug. 25-30; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 nightly; Kenny Digby, Fulton, evangelist; Jerry and Spin Smith, Bruce, music; Barney Watkins, pastor.

**Morgan City (Leflore):** Aug. 25-28; Jim Phillips, Greenwood, evangelist; Jeff Chamblee, Greenwood, and Olive Thompson, Ridgeland, music; Robert M. Moore, pastor.

**Midway, Moss Point:** Sept. 9-15; 6:45 nightly; Billy Williams, Gautier, evangelist; Randy Carney, Sunday, 11 a.m., music; Ralph Young, pastor.

**Linwood, Union:** Aug. 25-29; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Jerry Doggett, Petal, evangelist; Reggie Daugherty, Kosciusko, music; Jerry Bishop, pastor.

**Foxworth (Marion):** Aug. 25-28; Sunday School revival; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Keith Wilkinson, director, MBCB Sunday School Department, evangelist; Drew LeBlanc, Tylertown, music; Ladell Blanton, pastor.

## Revival Results

**McCall Creek (Franklin):** July 26-28; Eugene Roberts, Brookhaven, pastor, preaching; David and Ruth Luncford, Mt. Vernon, Ind., music; 1 profession of faith.

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## Names in the News

**Richmond Church, Lee County** (photo at right), held deacon ordination services on May 5 for Bruce Wilcox (left) and Tom Carr (right), who was reinacted. The charge to the deacons was led by G.L. Ford, retired former interim pastor. Sean K. Tutor Sr. (center) is pastor.



**Dot Bell** (right) was honored by **First Church, Pontotoc**, on Aug. 11, her 20th anniversary as church secretary. Pictured with her is her husband Jerry. W.H. Sims III is pastor.

**Tommy Dale Holcomb** was ordained to the ministry by **Doty Chapel Church** on June 30. A student at Blue Mountain College, he is available for pulpit supply, interim, or pastorate. He can be contacted at (601) 566-2101. Holcomb is a member of



**Holcomb** is a member of



**Rusty Bird** (third from right) has recently been called to serve as pastor of **Cruger Church, Cruger**. He was ordained on June 23 to the ministry by Cruger Church. He has served as youth minister in various churches. A native of West Point, Bird is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and New Orleans Seminary. His wife is the former Holly Walton of Manila, Ark. Participants in the ordination service (from left) were: Greg Householder, chairman of deacons; Gerald Welch, director of missions, Holmes Association; Steven Pritchett, music; Bird; Terry Partin, pastor of West End Church, West Point; and Tracy Hipps, pastor of Freedom Church, Myrick.

First Church, Verona.

is the pastor of Glade Church.

**Jim Taylor** was ordained to the ministry at **Glade Church, Laurel**, on Aug. 4. He has recently been called as pastor of Fellowship Church, Ellisville. He and his wife, the former Catrina Burnham of Pine Grove Church, Ellisville, are the parents of one daughter, Ally. Mike Thompson

**Myron C. Noonkester**, professor of history at William Carey College, will have an article published by the "Journal of British Studies." His article examines how English institutional values continue to permeate governing practice in the English-speaking world.

## Nearly one-fifth of all abortions granted to "evangelical" women

WASHINGTON (BP) — Women who claim no religious identification apparently are about four times as likely to have an abortion as those who identify with a religion, according to a recent study, but nearly one in five women who have an abortion describes herself as a "born-again" or "evangelical" Christian.

The 1994-95 national survey, released Aug. 7, also revealed an increasing number of women are using abortion as a back-up for contraceptive failure. The study showed about 58% of women used a form of contraception the month they became pregnant, as compared to 51% in a similar survey in 1987.

The Alan Guttmacher Institute (AGI), a special affiliate of the abortion advocacy organization Planned Parenthood Federation of America, surveyed nearly 10,000 women in 13 hospitals and 87 non-hospital facilities. The institute also did a study of nearly 10,000 abortion customers in 1987.

If the survey approaches accuracy, the results on evangelical women "should motivate us to persevere for the long haul," said Ben Mitchell, a Southern Baptist biomedical issues specialist. "This study demonstrates that we must not only function as the conscience of a culture gone mad, but we must do so for our own households as well. The church must use her prophetic voice more effectively even within

her own walls to prevent the senseless killing of the unborn."

The survey's results on contraceptive failure also confirm something pro-lifers have frequently observed, Mitchell said.

"Abortions are sought as a means of contraception — so that individuals can continue their promiscuous lifestyle or avoid the consequences of bad decisions," he said.

"Killing a baby is a pretty lousy remedy for a broken condom," Mitchell said. "Even if there were no other biblical reason for sexual abstinence before marriage, the failure rate of contraceptives is reason enough. Indeed, true love waits."

More than 32% of women who have abortions indicated their partners had used condoms the month they became pregnant, the survey showed.

AGI announced last year abortions had fallen from a high of about 1.6 million during much of the 1980s to 1.52 million in 1992.

## Forms available for '97 SBC

Housing guides and request forms for the 1997 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention are available by calling the office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's executive director-treasurer at (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. The meeting will be held in Dallas, June 17-19, 1997.





**ARTISTS PERFORM WITH CHRISTIAN FOCUS** — W.C. Taylor (left), member of Hardy Church, North Central Association, was elected June 29 as president of the National Fellowship of Performing Artists at the triennial meeting of the National Fellowship of Baptists in Missions at Ridgecrest, N.C. **Becky Collins** (right) of Dickson, Tenn., was elected coordinator. The National Fellowship of Performing Artists seek to reach people for the Lord through individual and joint efforts. For more information, contact Taylor at (601) 226-7299.

## Messianic panelists laud SBC's resolution to focus on Jewish evangelism

NASHVILLE (BP) — An evangelical scholar's book contending Jews don't need Jesus because of a separate covenant with God was the last straw for Jim Sibley, a Home Mission Board representative to the Jews.

"That's when I knew I had to make another push for my resolution," Sibley said. The resolution, calling for renewed evangelical outreach to Jews throughout the world, was among several adopted unanimously by messengers to the June 11-13 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) in New Orleans.

"I realized that as Southern Baptists, we were speaking from both sides of our mouths," Sibley said as part of a panel during the Southern Baptist Messianic Fellowship's annual training conference, Aug. 12-15 in Nashville. "Some voices said everyone but the Jewish people needed salvation. Jewish evangelism was so marginalized."

Six Messianic believers on the panel lauded the SBC for its resolution, which has stirred national controversy.

Sibley said he had faithfully introduced the same resolution since 1991, only to see it get bottled up in the resolutions committee each year. But after a break-away Southern Baptist group published a "two-and-a-half-page statement a year ago in March which decried a theology of conversion of the Jews," Sibley said he began thinking the time had come for his resolution to be adopted by the SBC.

"In my view, the very worst form of anti-Semitism is to withhold the gospel from the Jewish people," Sibley said. "Our failure to bring the gospel to the Jews will make Hitler's ovens pale in comparison to the heartache it causes the Lord."

Those involved in Messianic outreach "knew this thing would blow up on us," said Gus Elowitz, a Messianic congregational leader from Houston. "We knew Jews would take this as a Baptist effort to steal their children away from their faith."

"Unfortunately, we'll continue to take it on the chin until and unless we get other Christian denominations to support similar resolutions calling for a renewed outreach to Jews," Elowitz said.

Several SBC representatives in Israel, Sibley said, expressed "strong concern" that the SBC should have waited and not introduced the resolution so soon after the Israeli elections, Sibley said. "What they didn't realize is that this thing has been in the works since 1991 and was submitted to the resolutions committee several months before the elections were held."

But adverse reactions to the resolution are not limited to SBC workers in the Holy Land, Sibley said. "I've received hundreds of letters from people in other denominations who are upset because we Southern Baptists are going against the trend, against Vatican II and other such proclamations, in reaching out to evangelize Jews around the world."

# Have you heard of Internat'l Friendship Family program?

By Indy Whitten

September 1996 is fast approaching, and with it will come 500,000 internationals studying in colleges and universities in the United States.

More than 2,000 will form a part of the student bodies of Mississippi schools. Many more will live and work in our state. It is sad to think that most of them will come and go without experiencing the warm welcome that comes from cross-cultural friendships in an American Christian home.

The Foreign Mission Board (FMB) has begun an effort to reach internationals in the U.S. temporarily for education, business, or other reasons," said Bill Wakefield, FMB vice president for international outreach.

Retired or former missionaries are volunteers in 22 states who help make the International Friendship Family Program a reality.

The program helps internationals adjust to their new environment and befriends them while they are in the States. In return the host family is enriched by relationships formed that will last a lifetime.

How can we in Mississippi "get

a handle" on reaching the international students? It seems natural to have cooperation between Baptist Student Union (BSU) directors and local churches, with strong participation of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU).

Mississippi College is an example of the plans to extend open homes and open hearts to internationals.

The MC BSU director Jeff Powell spoke to the International/Missionary Kid group of the WMU at First Church, Clinton, in July.

Each international and missionary kid will be adopted by a family of the church. The suggestion is that this adoption be an activity at least once a month when the international is invited to enjoy time with the American family. This may be a meal, a picnic, a ball game, a fishing trip, or any other sharing activity.

FMB has information available, including two booklets, "A Family Guide to the International Friendship Family Program" and "An International Guide to the International Family Friendship Program."

These free booklets will help both Americans and internationals more easily cross cultural barriers. There is a very helpful folder entitled "Strangers in a Strange Land."

The Bible talks about reaching out to people of other lands: "The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself" (Lev. 19:34, NASB).

Only those who have experienced those early days in a foreign country can feel in their hearts the comfort of the words, "I was a STRANGER and you invited me in" (Matt. 25:35).

For information write or call The International Outreach Office, Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767; telephone (804) 219-1286; or Charles and Indy Whitten, International Outreach Representative for Mississippi, 108 West Lakeview Drive, Clinton, MS 39056; telephone (601) 924-1340.

*The Whittens are former career missionaries to Spain, and most recently served as MBCB's volunteer prayer ministry coordinators.*

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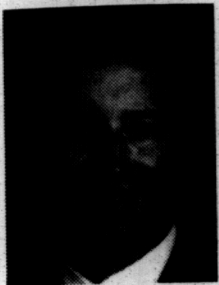
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## Uniform Worship and witness



By Jim Phillips  
Psalm 96

The worship of God is always a pertinent subject for Christians to study. We know from the book of Acts that the early Christians gathered for worship and fellowship. What is not always clear, however, is just what specifically constituted a worship experience? The closest description in the Bible of a man truly worshipping God just may be found in Isaiah 6. But rare is the occasion where God's people get such a glimpse of God on Sunday mornings.

The psalm under discussion is one whereby the writer was pleading for people to truly encounter God through an experience of worship (v. 9). He believed that just such a happening would impact the follower of God and would consequently bless the name of the Lord. When our eyes are removed from our own personal dilemmas and are thus focused on the incredible and majestic God of all glory, then life will take on a whole new perspective. The psalmist seems to portray his convictions that all of God's lower orders of creation recognize their Creator and praise him but he's not so sure about God's higher order of creation — basically, mankind.

**His activity (vv. 1-3).** The opening verses are punctuated with a call to song and praise. Our praise and thanksgiving is to be voiced based on the marvelous works of God. Our experiences of God's goodness and grace are to be the source of our witness for him. Recalling his saving grace — as well as the evidences of him sustaining our lives — should be testimony to others near and far. An occasional sense of God's nearness and blessings upon us or our family should result in a longing to express it in song, word, or deed. The world is waiting to hear about not just what God did long ago, but about what he is doing here and now!

**His attributes (vv. 4-6).** In comparison to the false gods that the world may claim as their own, our God is awesome and worthy of worship. The very creation itself is evidence enough of his righteousness and power. Though someone may claim an idol or statue or even a dead messiah as their god, our God is known as having made the heavens. How can anyone top that? The psalmist describes him as filled with splendor, majesty, strength, and glory, and thus worthy indeed of our fullest attention and allegiance. No one is deserving like the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for man's worship and praise.

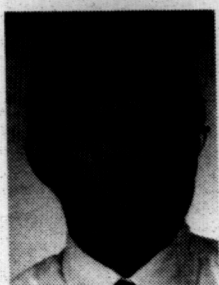
**Our acknowledgment (vv. 7-10).** An inventory of Yahweh's activities and attributes should prompt his followers to a gracious and reverent response. It might be helpful to remember that whenever God's people assemble for worship, God is the spectator, while we are the participants. To go to church to judge the sermon or the singing is not to be equated with worship. As God's people recognize the holiness and righteousness of God and then offer themselves unto his service, only then has worship actually taken place. If we leave such a service with no greater intent of surrender or servitude, then worship has been missed. The psalmist declares that all the earth should be made aware of who he is because of who we are in him. The whole world trembles when it becomes aware of just who he is and what powers and rights he holds. Failure to acknowledge these truths by the life that we live is to set ourselves up for the judgement of God.

**The creation's applause (vv. 11-13).** Regardless of the faithfulness of mankind, the psalmist recognizes that all the other creations of God declare his praise and glory. He witnesses the activity of nature and sees their movements as responsiveness to God. Like a poet inspired to pen his thoughts, the psalmist states that the blowing of the trees, the rushing of the stream, the pounding of the ocean waves, and even the stars glistening in the heavens above all declare the majesty and might of God. Nothing can quiet God's handiwork from giving forth evidence of a great and mighty God.

Perhaps that is why a stroll through the woods, taking stock of the beauty and complexity of God's creation, can often lead someone to sense the presence of God. As for me, God's signature is clearly seen on every Delta sunset over a cotton field in October. Worship and witness are to go hand in hand for all of those who call God their Master and Jesus Christ their Savior. What wonders is he trying to show you so that your witness for him can be heard?

Phillips is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.

## Bible Book Salvation proclaimed



By Ronald Bishop  
Revelation 14

**Assurance for the saints (vv. 1-13).** John took a time out for another interlude, apparently for the purpose of assuring the Christians of God's favor for them in the midst of so much persecution and promise of judgment.

John records a vision of "the Lamb" on Mt. Zion. Certainly this is Jesus. He has with him the 144,000 who belong to him. As in Chapter 7, this figurative number (12 x 12 x 10 x 10 x 10) refers to all those who belong to God. No one will be left out. These alone know the special song they are singing in praise of God.

Though living Christians were facing heartache, those who were already in God's presence were in bliss. Just who were these people? They were the redeemed. They lived for God rather than for worldly pleasure. They follow "the Lamb" wherever he goes, even to death. They have been forgiven of their sins.

John saw an angel flying throughout heaven, announcing that the persecutors of the Christians could find new life by fearing God and worshipping him. God wanted the wicked ones to know that he still cared for them. He was planning to bring an end to them but wanted to offer salvation to them before the end should come.

Next came the announcement of the fall of "Babylon," surely a reference to Rome. Rome had not fallen at the time John wrote Revelation, but neither had evil been eliminated from the world. However, both events were as good as done. It would take many years for Rome to fall. It is taking even longer for evil to be eliminated. But the final chapter in the great struggle between good and evil is already written. God is already the victor.

The announcement of the fall of Rome is followed by a warning to anyone who is tempted to worship the beast. Rome was at the height of its greatness, and many found it tempting to do what was popular. Anyone who should choose to deny Christ and worship the emperor in order to save his life would "drink the wine of God's wrath." John considered death preferable to eternal separation from God.

John made it clear that this warning was a call to endurance for the persecuted Christians. John tried to find a positive way to tell the Christians that some more of them would be killed. He did not choose to pretend that everything would be alright for God's people. Instead, he chose to remind them of the reward of those who die in the Lord.

**The coming judgment (vv. 14-20).** Then John saw a vision of Jesus seated on a cloud, waiting to claim his people. An angel appeared and announced that the time had come to gather in the ripe harvest. Jesus then reaped the earth. Another angel appeared, also having a sickle. One more angel appeared, announcing that the time had come for this angel to reap the vine of the earth.

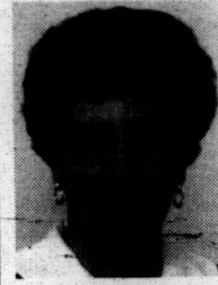
This crop should be understood as the wicked people of the earth, for they are thrown into the "wine press of the wrath of God." This harvest was trodden until blood flowed from the winepress several feet deep for many miles.

John's point in this chapter seems to be to remind the persecuted Christians that the time will come when God will judge all people. Those who are God's people will be gathered into God's presence. Those who are not God's people will suffer the consequences of rejecting God's invitation to a righteous life.

To be dogmatic and build complex systems of theology on minor details of his vision probably is to miss Revelation's primary message. Instead, modern Christians should embrace the basic message God sent to the first-century Christians: God will judge evildoers. Make sure you are part of God's people and be faithful to God.

Bishop teaches philosophy and religion at Jones County Junior College, Ellisville.

## Life and Work Say no to alcohol, drugs



By Cynthia Douglas  
Daniel 1; 2 Corinthians 6, 7;  
Ephesians 5

Why should I say no to alcohol and drugs?

Because the Bible warns us against abusing our bodies with alcohol and drugs. Does the problem exist in the United States? Statistics reveal 15.3 million people in the United States meet the criteria for either alcohol abuse or alcoholism.

Alcohol consumption, misuse, and consequences are estimated to cost our society \$86 million each year. Facts show that 95% of violent crimes on campus and 40% of academic problems are alcohol-related.

The Richmond (Va.) "Times-Dispatch" reported in 1995: "Seventy to eighty percent of the demand for cocaine came from white, mostly suburban users." Nearly 300,000 babies are born each year to drug-addicted women.

**Because of my personal conviction (Dan. 1:8-16).** Daniel was a handsome young man, chosen by the king from among the exiles, to be trained to enter the king's service. But Daniel refused the rich food and wine because he resolved not to defile himself (v. 8). Instead, he asked to be fed vegetables and water for 10 days. After the 10 days, Daniel was healthier and stronger than the men who ate the rich food (v. 15).

Choosing not to drink alcoholic beverages or to use drugs requires strong personal convictions based on a love for God and confidence in his teachings. God empowers his followers and he expects us to live in a manner which is pleasing to him. God desires the best for us and he desires that we avoid the pain and agony caused by alcohol and drugs. He is the reason for our joy — we need no other stimulant!

**Because of my relationship with God (2 Cor. 6:16-18).** God's people are to avoid behavior which is not consistent with their special relationship with him. Verse 16 repeats a covenant God made with his people as given in Leviticus 26:12: "I will be their God, and they will be my people."

Believers cannot participate in worldly, social pleasures which dishonor God. He calls us to "come out from them and be separate" (v. 17). God cautions his followers to "touch no unclean thing" (v. 17) and he will receive them as a father does to his sons and daughters.

The closer we draw to God, the more we desire lives which are pleasing to him. We no longer ask: "What can I get by with?" but we ask: "God, what would you have me to do?"

**Because of my response to God's promises (2 Cor. 7:1).** In the verses preceding 2 Corinthians 7, Paul stated some wonderful promises of God. One promise was God had said he would walk with them, dwell in them, and be their God. Another promise was God would be a Father to them if they would separate themselves from the unclean.

Paul now said because of all the promises of God, we are to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit." Therefore, believers are to say no to all forms of alcohol and mind-altering drugs.

About two in every five Mississippians will be involved in an alcohol-related crash during their lifetime. Alcohol is involved in at least 45% of all traffic fatalities. Crime related to alcohol is approaching the price tag of \$6 billion. Believers must respond to God's love by fleeing every appearance of evil!

**Because of my desire to live wisely (Eph. 5:15-18).** A wise person understands the will of God and walks in his way. This person is filled with the Spirit and their lives show his love in every action. Christians desire to yield control of their lives to the Holy Spirit rather than to alcohol and drugs.

The temptations to drink alcoholic beverages, use illegal drugs, and abuse prescription drugs exist in our society. But God's Word teaches believers to flee every appearance of evil. Because of his great love for us and our choice to live for him, we are able to say no to alcohol and drugs.

Douglas is a member of First Church, Columbus.



# capsules

**LAWYER ASKS FOR DISMISSAL OF LA. PROFESSORS' LAWSUIT: PINEVILLE, La. (ABP)** — A defamation suit filed in June by four professors at Louisiana College (an institution of the Louisiana Baptist Convention) should be dismissed on grounds that it violates the separation of church and state, argued a defendant's attorney in a paper filed in July. The U.S. and Louisiana constitutions "forbid courts from interfering in the ecclesiastical matters of religious groups," attorney Dale Smith argued in a brief asking for dismissal of the suit filed in a state court against his client, Leon Hyatt of Pineville. Louisiana College professors Carlton Winbery, Fred Downing, James Heath, and Connie Douglas sued Hyatt and others responsible for publishing and distributing letters last year the professors claim were false and defamatory. Among charges in the letters, which were circulated by conservatives prior to last year's state convention meeting, were that the teachers taught anti-Christian values, exposed students to pornography, and urged tolerance of homosexuality and abortion. The professors' lawsuit termed those and other charges "absolutely and patently false." In addition to First Amendment grounds, according to the Louisiana "Baptist Message," Smith asked for dismissal arguing the charges are too vague for the defendant to respond to appropriately or defend.

**BROADMAN & HOLMAN RECEIVES THREE AWARDS: NASHVILLE (BP)** — Broadman & Holman (B&H) Publishers of the Baptist Sunday School Board has received three Impact awards from retailers attending the annual Christian Booksellers Association Convention in July in Anaheim, Calif. B&H has been cited for three consecutive years with Impact awards, which are given annually for promotional materials and campaigns. The B&H awards were: outstanding design in in-store poster display for the "Christy: The Sweetest Gift Video Poster;" outstanding design in a special sale campaign for a previously released product for the "UltraThin Bible Campaign;" and outstanding design in a product introduction piece for the "Spanish Bibles Educational Flip Chart."

**TEXAS CHURCH SENDS LETTER URGING OPPOSITION TO CLINTON: LAKE JACKSON, Texas (ABP)** — A Texas Baptist church has mailed more than 7,000 letters calling for the defeat of President Bill Clinton and other candidates who favor abortion rights, a move that could violate a ban on electioneering by tax-exempt groups. Leaders at Second Church in Lake Jackson, Texas, defended the mailing as educational. Ronnie Whitehead, associate pastor of the Lake Jackson church, said the goal of the letter was to educate voters and encourage them to "look at what the word of God says" before casting their vote. Whitehead told a reporter it's no secret that the Democratic Party is pro-choice. He said he knew that the mailing might raise questions about the church's tax-exempt status but that he consulted legal counsel first. Whitehead said the church created and mailed the letter with "designated funds." Phil Strickland, director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, said, "It is clear that churches can't support or oppose a specific candidate and remain a tax-exempt organization." Strickland said it was hard to see how the letter could be interpreted in any way except as opposing a particular candidate. In 1993 the IRS stripped a New York church of its tax-exempt status after the church placed newspaper advertisements urging Christians to vote against then-presidential candidate Bill Clinton. The IRS decision has been appealed in that case by Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice and is still pending.

**KAREN GROSS DIES AFTER CANCER BATTLE: NASHVILLE** — Karen Russey Gross, Bible Learners biblical studies designer in the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division, died Aug. 6 of cancer. She joined the staff of the BSSB in 1994 after serving three years as products editor at Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Ala. She was GA/Missions Friends director for Arkansas in 1976-77 and minister of education at First Church, Hope, 1978-81. She also served as a home missionary in Arkansas and as a Missionary Journeyman in Vietnam. Gross is survived by her husband Bob and daughter Janan.

**SPECIAL AWARDS HIGHLIGHT COVENANT AWARDS CEREMONY: FORT WORTH (BP)** — Larry Poland, Michael Warren, and the CBS television program "Touched By An Angel" received special "Covenant" awards at the third annual Covenant Awards Ceremony Aug. 2. Covenant is an Radio and Television Commission (RTVC) ministry that produces and promotes Christian family values programming. FamilyNet and ACTS are the RTVC's broadcast and cable television services, which telecast the ceremony live from RTVC studios in Fort Worth. Award recipient Poland is founder of Mastermedia International, a nonprofit Christian organization that works with media leaders in Hollywood and New York. Warren received his award for his role in bringing moral values to prime-time television through programs like "Family Matters." The award to "Touched By An Angel" was presented by former "Dukes of Hazzard" star John Schneider, who appeared in one of last season's episodes.

## Mission volunteers wounded in inner-city teens' crossfire

**CHICAGO (ABP)** — Two Texans on a youth mission trip were wounded by cross fire during a shoot-out Aug. 3 in inner-city Chicago.

Ali Stanke, one of nine youths on the trip from Seventh & James Church in Waco, was grazed by a bullet. She was treated at a Chicago hospital and released. She and a friend flew home to Waco the next day.

Linda McManness, one of four adult sponsors, was shot in the thigh. She stayed in the hospital two nights and rode home with the rest

of the Seventh & James group at the end of the week-long mission trip.

The Texans had just completed their orientation at Uptown Church in inner-city Chicago when they became trapped in the cross fire between two gun-toting teens.

"We walked out of the church about 10 minutes after 9 (p.m.)," said Susie Shearer, youth minister at the Waco church. "And although it was dark outside, I wasn't too concerned. The area was well lit with a McDonald's across the street, and there was a lot of activity

on the street — people walking their dogs and others out with their children in strollers."

The group was partway down the street when a boy on a bicycle sped by, followed by a group of girls who were running, Shearer said. An adult sponsor heard one of the running girls say, "I'm not going to let him shoot me."

Before the Texans could react, two other Chicago youth were among them — one in the street and another by them on the sidewalk — shooting at each other.

"We crouched behind a car, but by that time, two people had been hit," Shearer noted. "We stayed down until a policeman came." The youngsters with the guns fled. Neither Uptown pastor Tom Maluga nor Shearer knows if they have been arrested, they said.

Even though the shoot-out was harrowing, Seventh & James Church and members of the mission trip also remain committed to sharing God's love, Shearer said.

"We've had some amazing discussions with the youth group," she explained. "One of the main things we've discussed is this could happen anywhere, and this is why we do missions."

"We've talked with our kids about the sanctity of life.... (but) these kids (involved in the shooting) have never been told they are valuable, and it stands to reason they wouldn't value others' lives."

"Consequently, the witness of Christians is particularly valuable, because they can tell people who have not experienced love that Christ loves them, and they can demonstrate that love with their own actions, she said.

Since hate-inspired violence can happen any place, the Seventh & James congregation, wants to continue to do missions — in Waco as well as big cities like Chicago, Shearer reported.

Maluga said he believes Christians should take risks to do missions, even in difficult places. "The book of Acts is full of people who took risks," he said.



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

*How can I encourage my teenagers, who feel disgraced over their father's adultery? They are ashamed and depressed.*

Depression is "frozen rage." Being ashamed is experiencing feelings of inferiority or unworthiness. These are very real feelings for teenagers, who believe they live in an idealistic world where nothing bad will ever happen to them. When reality hits, that idealistic world is shattered. You can't take away the hurt. Let them talk, cry, shout, whatever it takes (short of physical violence) to work out their pain. Christian counseling or the listening ear of a trusted adult is also a good idea, especially if you find you cannot cope with their pain. Teenagers must learn to solve problems and work out solutions as they grow into adults. You can encourage — "put courage in" — these young people, walking beside them just as God does. This may be difficult as you work through your own problems. Your objectivity right now

is pretty skewed. That is another good reason to seek Christian counseling for you and your children.

*My AIDS-stricken son made me promise to tell people he had cancer. He has passed away, but I'm still saying he had cancer. How should I handle this in the future?*

Look at both sides. If you tell the truth, what will people say? Good friends will understand and go on, while others will likely pass judgment. Your spirit may be telling you that you cannot go on with this lie, and your taking time to write for advice indicates that this situation goes against your value system. Jesus said, "... you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32, NIV). You will not be discrediting your son by telling the truth, especially since you indicated in your letter that he repented of his lifestyle and rededicated his life to God. What a testimony!

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

## Bibliocipher

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NRUN OV NRS UESL NF XFZS RS ZOERN LRSK  
NRS SPXSSHOVE GOXRSL FD ROL EGUXS OV ROL  
MOVHVSLL NFKUGH CL NRGFCER XRGOLN ISLCL.  
SARSLOUVL NKF: LSQSV

This week's clue: N equals T.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Philippians One: Nine.

Baptist Record

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